

AL-II-B-012

LOCK HOUSE #71 and LIFT LOCK  
C & O Canal at Oldtown  
1845

Lock House #71 is one of 75 lock houses located along the C & O Canal. It is a rectangular frame building covered with bevel siding and was originally used to house a locktender and his family. The house is located next to Lift Lock #71 for it was the locktender's job to maintain and operate his respective lock.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

0101490422  
AL-II-B-012

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Lock House #71 and Lift Lock

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Along C &amp; O Canal in

sixth

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Oldtown

☒ VICINITY OF

Allegany

STATE

COUNTY

Maryland

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE  
☐ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☒ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

National Parks Service

Telephone #: 202-343-1100

STREET &amp; NUMBER

C St. Between 18th &amp; 19th Sts.

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Allegany County Courthouse

Liber #: 470

Folio #: 251

STREET &amp; NUMBER

30 Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Cumberland

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

AL-II-B-012

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

Lock House and Lift Lock #71 are located along the C&O Canal in Oldtown, Allegany County.

Lock House #71 is a rectangular shaped frame building that is two stories high and three bays wide. The house is covered by bevel siding. The entire structure is supported by a low stone foundation. The roof is gabled with a soffit and eaves and is covered with tin. The main entrance is a vertically paneled door which is covered by a semi-enclosed shed roofed porch. The windows have plain trim with a cornice and at present have been boarded up to prevent vandalism. There are two corbeled brick chimneys located at the flush ends of the building.

The house is structurally sound and retains much of its original fabric and appearance.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lift Lock Houses along the C & O Canal were built to house the locktender and his family. The locktender was on call 24 hours a day and his job was to maintain and operate his respective lock. 74 locks were built along the 184 mile canal to ascend the 609 foot rise from Georgetown to Cumberland. The canal opened for navigation to Cumberland on October 10, 1850, so the lock houses in Allegany County were probably built in the late 1840's.<sup>1</sup>

The locktender's salary was only \$25.00 a month, but he was granted the lock house to live in and an acre of land for a garden. Many of them also had hogs, chickens, or a cow or two that would also graze on the land.

If a boat approached at night, it was necessary to arouse the locktender. When near the lock, the mule driver would loudly chant, "Lock ready -- Lock ready -- Hey -- ey -- ey, Lock!", and the steersman in the back of the back of the boat would sound off a bugle. The locktender would then signal with a lantern as to whether or not the lock was ready to enter. It took ten to fifteen minutes for a canal boat to clear the lock with the help of the boat crew as well as the locktender. This same system was used for all of the 74 years the canal was in operation.<sup>2</sup>

The canal ceased operation in 1924, and many of the locktenders remained in the houses until they found other jobs. Construction materials of lift-lock houses in Allegany County include frame and log with stone foundations. Their use is now limited in this county to public viewing in the C & O Park areas, although specific entrance into them is restricted.

1. History of Western Maryland, Scharf: Everts Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1882, p. 712
2. Wolfe George, I Drove Mules on the C & O Canal, Dover Graphic Co., Dover, 1969, p. 51

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Allegany County Land Records, Cumberland, Maryland

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 121.75 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE John Nelson, Joan Baldwin, &amp; Steve Beale

Allegany County Historic Sites Survey

9/1/76

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

507 National Highway

TELEPHONE

777-8991

CITY OR TOWN

Lavale

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

INVENTORY NO. A1-11-B-012470/251 ~~473/586~~DATE: 8/4/76121.75 Acres ~~283/65~~REMODELING: Drastic, moderate, minorNAME OF PROPERTY: Lock House # 71 + Lift LockLOCATION OF PROPERTY: Along C+O Canal in OldtownDIRECTION DWELLING FACES: SoutheastNAME OF OWNER: National Parks + RecreationADDRESS: C St. Between 18th + 19th St.Washington, D.C. 202-343-1100STORIES: 1( ) 2(☒) 3( ) 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) BAYS: 1( ) 2( ) 3(☒) 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) 7( ) ( )

WINGS, ADDITIONS:

Dwelling Shape: (square, cross, rectangular)

WALL CONSTRUCTION:

- (☒) FRAME: Bevel, clapboard, weatherboard, wood shingles, board & batten (type?)  
( ) BRICK: Bond type- common, English, Flemish. Sketch variants.  
( ) STONE: Bond type- rubble, ashlar (random or regular), quoins-plain, rusticated  
( ) LOG  
( ) Other: Coverings

WALL FEATURES: BELT COURSE, PILASTERS, OTHERS \_\_\_\_\_

FOUNDATIONS: HIGH, LOG, BRICK, STONEWATER TABLE: NONE, PLAIN, BEVELED, MOULDED BRICKWINDOWS, TRIM, SHUTTERS: 1/1( ) 2/2( ) 6/6( ) 9/6( ) 9/9( ) other( )  
Boarded pegged( ) nailed( ) wide( ) narrow( ) mitred( ) pediment( )

ENTRANCE, DOORS: LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

HARDWARE: original(☒) replaced( )  
FAN LIGHT, TRANSOM, SIDE LIGHTS, PLAIN  
Paneled, Verticle, Horizontal BoardsCORNICE, BARGE, EAVES: (crown, fascia, soffit, bed)  
original( ) replaced( ) Rafter Ends, Modillions, Dentils, Frieze, ArchitraveROOF: GABLE FRONT, GABLE FLANK, HIP, SHED, MANSARD, GAMBREL, FLAT, DORMERS #  
MATERIAL: wood shingles, slate, tin, asphalt original( ) replaced( )PORCHES: SHAPE OF ROOF - shed(☒) hip( ) gable( )CHIMNEYS: NUMBER 2 BRICK(☒) STONE( ) CORBELLED(☒) original(☒) replaced( )  
LOCATION: Flush end(☒) Inside end( ) Outside end( ) Central( ) Interior( )ARCHES: Door and window: Keystone, Flat, Segmental, Semicircular

COMMENTS:

Use - No Longer Used

Significance -

Date Constructed - 1840'sCondition - Fair - Good

# Key points regarding interior architecture.

## 1. Floor plan

No through hall--How many rooms long and deep?  
Where is stairway? Straight or winding?

With through hall--Rooms on both sides? How many?

Rooms on one side only? How many?

Is stair in through hall?

Open or enclosed? Straight--one run. Straight--landing

How many? Curved.

If not in hall, where is stair?

## 2. Wall finish: plaster, paneled, board partition

Note presence of chair rail, cornice, etc.

## 3. Fireplaces: How many? Parallel to walls or diagonal in corner?

Mantels: wood--mouldings, pilasters, columns  
masonry--marble(what color?), brick

## 3. Doors: on the inside of exterior doors, note the presence of applied flush boards and their direction (diagonal, vertical, horizontal). In general are doors paneled or ledge or other?

## 4. Door and window trim: plain, architrave; fluted, reeded; pilasters

## 5. Kitchen: Where is original if extant or known (marked by very large fireplace)? Separate building; wing to principal dwelling; within principal dwelling? On which floor of any of the above?

6. How preserved on hand (if any) or any modern repairs placed.

AI-II-B-025

AI-II-B-026

AI-II-B-021

AI-II-B-027 AI-II-B-020

AI-II-B-019

AI-II-B-018

AI-II-B-008

AI-II-B-012

AI-II-B-009

AI-II-B-002

AI-II-B-001

AI-II-B-007

AI-II-B-024

AI-II-B-013

AI-II-B-015

AI-II-B-014

AI-II-B-017

AI-II-B-016

AI-II-B-010

AI-II-B-012

Lock House #71 + Lift Lock

C+O Canal - Oldtown

USGS - Oldtown Quad

1:24,000

1950

Green Spring

Green Spring

South Branch

Branch 3





Lift Lock #71

A1-11-B-012

C+O Canal

Old town

John E. Nelson

8/4/76

~~225~~

WEST



LOCK HOUSE #71

A1-11-B-012

Along C+O Canal

Old tower

John E. Nelson

814176

~~SOUTH EAST~~

NORTH WEST



LOCK HOUSE # 71

A1-11-B-012

Along Cto Canal

Oldtown

John E. Nelson

8/4/76

~~NORTH WEST~~

SOUTH EAST